

REMARKS

Applicants have now had an opportunity to carefully consider the Examiner's comments set forth in the Office Action of September 10, 2004.

Reconsideration of the Application is requested.

Brief Summary of the Office Action

Claims 11 and 12 have been indicated as containing allowable subject matter, but stand objected to for depending from a rejected base claim.

Claims 1, 3, 5, 13-15, 17 and 18 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by Nishii (US 6,501,556).

Claim 2 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Nishii in view of Toru (JP 07-307827).

Claims 4, 6-10 and 19 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Nishii in view of Motoyama (US 5,550,614).

Claim 16 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Nishii in view of Ota (US 6,233,057).

Brief Summary of the Amendments to the Claims

Claims 11 and 12 have been placed in independent format.

Claims 6-9 have been amended to depend from claim 12.

Claims 5 and 10 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer of the subject matter contained therein.

Claims 1-4 have also been amended, and new claim 20 has been added.

Comments and/or Arguments

Claims 11 and 12, indicated as containing allowable subject matter, have been placed in independent format, and are now in condition for allowance, along with claims 6-9 that now depend from claim 12.

New claim 20 is an apparatus claim that corresponds to the method claim 12, already indicated as containing allowable subject matter. Claim 20 is therefore also allowable.

The rejection of claim 13 is hereby traversed. Notably, in the "Allowable Subject Matter" section of the Office Action (paragraph 32 on page 9, in particular), the Examiner expressly concedes that the "prior art fails to teach of deleting

unwanted portion from input data." Claim 13 explicitly calls for "a portion deleter operative ... to remove the at least one unwanted portion of the input image data" Clearly, claim 13 calls for exactly that which, according to the Office Action itself, the prior art does not teach. Accordingly, it is submitted that claim 13, along with claims 14-19 that depend therefrom, distinguish patentably over the prior art, and the rejections thereto should be withdrawn.

Amended claim 1 also distinguishes patentably over the prior art. Claim 1 now calls for a method operative to automatically exclude an unwanted page in an input stream of a printing system job from an output stream of the printing system job. The method includes the steps of: establishing a characteristic of a page indicative of an unwanted page; monitoring the input stream to detect data representative of the characteristic; identifying one or more pages of the printing system job that contain data representative of the characteristic; and removing the identified pages thereby excluding them from the output stream.

Nishii fails to teach each and every one of the foregoing steps/elements claimed. For example, Nishii does not teach establishing a characteristic of a page indicative of an unwanted page. Rather, Nishii merely teaches using a blank page detector **10** to detect blank pages. Nishii provides no specific teaching as to how the blank page detector **10** works, only that it detects blank pages. Clearly, there is no teaching in Nishii that any characteristic indicative of an arbitrary unwanted page is established. Furthermore, Nishii merely teaches that blank pages are detected. Nishii does not expressly teach or fairly imply that an input stream is monitored to detect data representative of a characteristic that has been established as indicative of an arbitrary unwanted page. Accordingly, Nishii also does not identify pages containing the detected data.

Clearly, Nishii fails to explicitly teach or fairly suggest each and every step/element of the claim in as much detail as claimed and arranged as claimed. Therefore, it is submitted that claim 1, along with claims 2-4 that depend therefrom, now distinguish patentably over the prior art, and the rejections thereto should be withdrawn.

CONCLUSION


For the reasons detailed above, it is submitted all claims remaining in the application (Claims 1-4, 6-9 and 11-20) are now in condition for allowance. The foregoing comments do not require unnecessary additional search or examination.

In the event the Examiner considers personal contact advantageous to the disposition of this case, he/she is hereby authorized to call John Cornely, at telephone number (216) 861-5582.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date



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